

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 25, 2003

**CONTACT:**

Karen Sibert or  
Douglas Franklin

(202) 962-3200

**COALITION ANNOUNCES 1ST ANNUAL**

**“Greater Washington DC Region’s Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup>” List**  
*Employers step up to cut down employee stress, commuting costs, traffic & air pollution.*

**Washington DC (June 25, 2003)** - The Greater Washington DC Region’s Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> Coalition recognizes 76 employers today for being placed on the first-ever regional **Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> List**. The list spotlights the region’s employers who offer outstanding commuter benefits to employees, thereby cutting traffic and air pollution and improving health and quality of life for formerly stressed out commuters.

“For many Americans, just getting to work can be a job in itself,” said Nicholas Ramfos who directs the Commuter Connections program at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. “These leading companies are helping their employees withdraw from the stressful gridlock plagued roads and are providing alternatives to driving alone to work so they can live healthier and more productive lives while cutting air pollution at the same time,” he said.

Some of the area employers making the list (*full list attached*) include GEICO Direct, Discovery Communications, National Institutes of Health, George Mason University, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, U.S. Department of Energy, and The Calvert Group. Listed employers must meet a National Standard of Excellence for commuter benefits by offering employees benefits such employer-provided transit passes, vanpool subsidies, preferred parking for carpools/vanpools, bike lockers, compressed work schedules, and teleworking options. The Calvert Group commuter benefits program found ways to discourage employees from driving alone and pays the full cost of transit fares. They even pay up to \$350 extra per year for the purchase of bicycles and walking equipment for those biking and walking to work. Or as their Web site puts it, “we’ll even buy your walking shoes if you hoof it to work!”

To qualify as one of **The Greater Washington DC Region’s Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup>**, organizations must provide:

- A central point of contact for information, who actively informs employees of commuter benefits available.
- Access to a regional or employer-provided Guaranteed Ride Home program, which is a free service through [www.commuterconnections.org](http://www.commuterconnections.org)

- At least one primary commuter benefit, which can include a monthly transit/vanpool pass subsidy, cash in lieu of free parking, or a significant telecommuting program.
- At least three supporting commuter benefits, which can include carpool/vanpool incentives, lockers/showers for bikers or walkers, incentives for living near work, or onsite amenities such as day care or dry cleaning.

### **About the Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup>**

The Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> initiative recognizes employers that voluntarily offer a comprehensive package of commuter benefits. Participating organizations must meet a *National Standard of Excellence* as defined by program criteria. The Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> companies improve employee recruiting, retention and job satisfaction and save money from reduced payroll taxes and parking costs. Employees enjoy reduced stress and costs associated with driving alone to work and help the environment by reducing auto emissions.

Visit [www.bestworkplacesforcommuters.gov](http://www.bestworkplacesforcommuters.gov) or [www.bwc.gov](http://www.bwc.gov) for more information.

### **About the Greater Washington DC Region's Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> Coalition**

The Greater Washington DC Region's Best Workplaces for Commuters<sup>SM</sup> Coalition is composed of leading government and business organizations in the region working to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, cut global warming emissions, and make commuting less stressful and costly for employers and employees. It includes Commuter Connections, General Services Administration, Greater Washington Board of Trade, Metropolitan Washington Work/Life Coalition, National Capital Planning Commission, U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.